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County Life

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Christmas Village Magic
A peek inside an elaborate mini village on pg. 3

Beauty of between
Boxing Day traditions on pg. 5

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre sports a pop of red in a winter wonderland. /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

Save the Tax on Clearance!
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See in store for details.

Writing on the Senior Side

On the Feast of Stephen

GAIL STELTER
County Life Contributor

On the Feast of Stephen
Good King Wenceslas looked out
On the Feast of Stephen
When the snow lay round about
Deep and crisp and even
Brightly shone the moon that night
Though the frost was cruel
When a poor man came in sight
Gathering winter fuel

As you know, Good King Wenceslas is a Christmas carol that tells the story of a king who goes on a journey, braving harsh winter weather, to give alms to a poor peasant on the Feast of Stephen. According to the Acts of the Apostles, Stephen was an early church deacon who angered various synagogues members by his teachings. Accused of blasphemy at his trial, he made a speech and was then stoned to death. (Wikipedia)

During Good King Wenceslas' journey, his page is about to give up the struggle against the cold weather but is enabled to continue by following the king's footprints through the deep snow. The legend is based on a story about Saint Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia (907–935), who was not, in fact, a king.

The Feast of Saint Stephen, December 26th, originated in the United Kingdom as a day to give gift boxes. The exact origins of this tradition are debated, but there are a few theories:

Alms boxes: During Advent, churches would place alms boxes for parishioners to donate to the poor. The church would then distribute the money on December 26th.

Gifts for employees: Wealthy business owners would give their employees gifts and leftovers in boxes the day after Christmas.

Day off for servants: Lords of manors would give their servants the day off on December 26th and give them boxes of gifts, money, and leftovers.

We call it Boxing Day, and it has been a Canadian holiday since 1871. The traditions of earlier times have been replaced.

I remember my mom telling me that when she was a child, Boxing Day was a day to deliver gift boxes to people you didn't get to see or visit before Christmas. Since most people worked right up to Christmas, this made sense to me.

When I was young, Simpson's was open on Christmas Eve, so the statutory holiday of Boxing Day became a second day for mom to be home. It was especially delightful if Christmas fell on Saturday or Sunday as she would have a longer holiday. My dad worked for the government, so no work weekends for him, and he always seemed to have more holidays. Boxing Day was my day to play with new gifts, go skating, visit friends or read my new book. It was unusual for us all to be home, making Boxing Day warm, happy and filled with gentle memories. I suspect many senior siders have similar memories.

As a young mom, I loved Boxing Day almost as much as Christmas: a lovely, almost calm family day after the amazing, exhausting and busy Christmas celebrations. Those kids woke up so early on Christmas morning, and the day never stopped after that, so hurray for Boxing Day and sleeping late, leisurely morning coffee and playing with our kids and best of all, no cooking, leftovers for dinner. I never joined the shoppers at the Boxing Day sales. They did entice the teens and many others. For others, Boxing Day is a day to go to the show or watch a movie at home, and this year, hockey fans will look forward to the annual Junior World Championships. There will be fun in the snow and family outings to the ski hill and cross-country ski trails. Visitors and guests will be here to meet up with family and cottagers will be excited about our beautiful winter wonderland. Some will smile and laugh in the brisk moments of winter campfires and hikes. I will rest and read and write. I wonder if my Leafs play on Boxing Day. That would be a lovely evening. Oh, perhaps I am being selfish. It would be nice for them to be home with their families that evening. Boxing Day is a holiday gift both when you do something and when you purposefully do not. It is a Canadian treasure.

But what about Good King Wenceslas? The feast of Saint Stephen is not part of our treasure. The change to Boxing Day meant a shift from a day of giving to a day of spending. Is that okay? I suppose that we can now give alms, items for the poor and monetary gifts and bonuses for employees before Christmas. It works, and it also makes sense. And yet, I have that image of Good King Wenceslas and his page trudging through the cold night to bring a gift to the poor man, and it seems so personal and meaningful. The message is giving. We don't have to trudge through deep snow or deal with cruel frost but we do have poor who need our help.

According to Canada's Official Poverty Line, the poverty rate was 9.9 per cent in 2022, and about 3.8 million people living in Canada were in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2024). The HKPR District Health Unit report 'Addressing Food Insecurity and Poverty Report' for 2023 states that 12.9 per cent of households in the County of Haliburton are considered low-income and struggle to pay rent, bills, and healthy food.

Whatever your Boxing Day happenings or lack of happenings may be, enjoy, give thanks and, somewhere in the back of your mind, tuck away (or sing out loud) the last verse of the Good King Wenceslas Christmas Carol.

Therefore, Christian men, be sure
Wealth or rank possessing
Ye, who now will bless the poor
Shall yourselves find blessing.

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Canadian Tire
Foodland *
Minden Valumart *
Rexall *
Shoppers Drug Mart Haliburton *
Todd's Independent *

All inserts are to selected distribution areas.

For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

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Canoe FM Begins On-Air Testing on 97.1 FM in Minden!

Canoe FM is excited to announce that **Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED)** has authorized us to begin on-air testing of the permanent transmitting facilities at our repeater station, **CKHA-FM-1**, broadcasting on **97.1 FM** out of **Minden, Ontario.**

Testing will begin on **December 17, 2024**, and will conclude no later than **January 28, 2025**.

We value your feedback during this testing period. If you have any ***comments or concerns***, please reach out to us by:
Email: manager@canoefm.com
Phone: 705-457-1009

After the testing has been approved 97.1 Minden & 100.9 Haliburton will be permanent frequencies in our County. Thank you for your support as we improve Canoe FM's reach to serve more of our amazing community!

Canoe FM – Community Radio - The Voice of the Haliburton Highlands.

Rob McCaig sits in front of his detailed Alpine Christmas Village, a tradition he embraces each holiday season. /Submitted

Rob McCaig's historic Alpine Christmas Village

What do you get when you combine newspapers, styrofoam, scrap wood, a broken down armoire, five large tables, a workmate, recycled packaging materials, rocks from Lake Ontario to Haliburton and three weeks of hard work? Not recycling at its best, you get an over 300 square foot Alpine Christmas Village!

Inspired by our beautiful landscape and mountaintop memories, Haliburton resident Rob McCaig once again has created one of the largest Christmas Villages that is truly a sight to be seen!

For over 44 years, what started as a plastic Alpine Village and some mini lights back in the day, has now morphed into a Christmas tradition the McCaig Family have enjoyed for many Christmases.

With over 52 buildings, four trains, 10 firepits, hundreds of trees, five mountain ranges and 22 levels, McCaig's Christmas creation doesn't disappoint, a labor of love that takes about three weeks to complete every year.

Some of the highlights of this one-of-a-kind work of architectural art, includes a downtown with dance halls, community centre, post office, restaurants, taverns, a police station, barbershop, grocery store, farmer's market, bakeries, flower shop, library, town hall, pet salon/store, skating rinks, a farm, a school and Christmas tree lots. The rolling hills and alpine areas also consist of three churches, three ski/toboggan hills, six skating/hockey rinks, two train stations, and three rivers running throughout the community. In addition, there's a Santa's Village with a workshop, consisting of reindeer stables, candy stores and more bakeshops. McCaig says "his village would make any town planner envious", with a chuckle.

" This year I have decided to name our alpine village after our two Grand Sons, with a bit of a twist, I call it McKaidwrenville."

When asked if next year's village will get bigger, McCaig replies "probably".

Merry Christmas to all!

Submitted

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Betwixt and between

KATE BUTLER
County Life Contributor

If my calculations are right, I believe that by the time you read this, it'll be around Boxing Day - I hope that you're having a wonderful holiday season so far! When I was very little, I mistakenly thought that the reason for the name Boxing Day was because it was the day to tidy up the mess which had been created around the house on Christmas morning, but of course this isn't the case. Today, we might associate Boxing Day with door crasher sales at jam packed shopping malls, but historically, it was a day for Christmas boxes. These boxes, containing gifts, food and perhaps a Christmas bonus were given to the domestic servants in wealthier homes by their employers. For those in service, Boxing Day was extremely special because it was their holiday, a chance to head home and spend time with family and friends after a Christmas Day spent working.

These days, we might see Christmas Day as the climax of the festive season, but earlier in history, Christmas Day was just the beginning. In fact, the familiar tune, *The Twelve Days of Christmas* actually refers to the twelve days beginning with Christmas Day and extending through until Twelfth Night, the evening before Epiphany. The history of that famous carol dates back at least to its first publication in 1780, but it draws on tunes and traditions with an extensive history prior to that. While there has been much speculation about the meaning of the gifts mentioned in the tune, we do know that each of the twelve days came with its own meaning and significance, such as the feast of St. Stephen (of *Good King Wenceslas* fame). Some of days were more solemn, such as the Feast of the Holy Innocents, but festivities reached a fever pitch by Twelfth Night. These January 5th celebrations in many ways resembled today's New Year's celebrations with parties, indulgence and boisterous behaviour. It was a chance to turn the usual social order topsy-turvy, often with a Lord or Lady of Misrule selected to lead the revelry.

I share all this to remind you that the holiday season is not yet over. The time between Christmas and New Year's is ideally a time all its own, which has a sort of liminal quality. Of course, it is still work time for many people, ranging from first responders to those who work in shops and restaurants (thank you to everyone out there covering shifts at this time of year!) but the pace of this brief window in the year is undoubtedly different. I hope that you fully embrace it and enjoy it for however long you can. It might be the perfect time to catch-up with friends and family you haven't yet seen this holiday season. Perhaps you might devote a whole day to reading a book you unwrapped on Christmas morning or spend a lazy afternoon watching a favourite movie in the glow of the holiday lights. After all the preparations for the holidays, you might just want to enjoy the stillness or instead get your body moving with a winter walk. However you choose to spend this time of year, I really do hope that you'll enjoy its uniqueness and not feel the need to rush back into the usual cycle of daily life too quickly - the time for that will be here quickly enough. This is a betwixt and between time of year and that's a wonderful place to be.

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Recurring events

Weekly Meat Rolls
When: Every Saturday, 3 p.m.
Where: Coboconk Legion, Hwy 48 and 35
Five spins for $10. The first four rounds are for highest and lowest score with two winners per round. The last round is for a prepare-it-yourself dinner for two. Additional spins for this round are available for $2 each. Call 705-454-8127 or email info@coboconklegion.ca for more information.

TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly
When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of $59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Bridge for Seniors
When: Mondays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Schofield Room
All welcome

Haliburton Legion Walking Group
When: Mondays at 9 to 10 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
A safe walking environment. Lead by an Occupational therapist.

Free Balanced Fitness and Active Social Senior Classes
When: Every second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

Bid Euchre
When: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembr ance Hall
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Send your letters to the editor to vivian@haliburtonpress.com. Letters must be signed and include a phone number.

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Twinkling lights

WE MOVED into Haliburton when I was about six months pregnant. While we loved our little yellow farmhouse in the heart of Minden, we had outgrown the space, and with another little one on the way, we knew we needed a change.

As we got settled into the space, the leaves began to fall. I watched as the forest outside our bedroom window began to open up; the many shades of green shying away; crinkling and curling to reds, yellows, and burnt oranges.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Editor

It's always a bit of a sad feeling, to watch those leaves fall. The ending of a season, the formalization of a chapter closing.

Sometimes these physical signs of change serve as reminders that we are not invincible; that Old Man Time keeps ticking away, whether we are along for the ride or not.

Having moved from the core of a community into a home in the woods, watching these signs and signals of time change around me; all while watching my own belly grow, carried a certain sense of loneliness, of uncertainty, of reflection.

I made an effort to walk through these woods each and every evening, the dull sun resting on the branches as it dipped below the clouds a little earlier; inching towards the long winter ahead. The quiet of the woods felt unnerving initially. No sounds of sirens, no clash of cars. The buzz of community bustle felt far away, and I was left only amongst my own thoughts.

Thoughts of the future, or the present. Questions about the physicalities of pregnancy, of next steps in my career. Worries and wonders and wishes.

As my pregnancy progressed, so had the seasons, until finally, each and every leaf had found its last resting place amongst the frost-bitten ground. The view outside my window now donning the etches and scratches of bare branches; the softness of the leaves melted away.

I hated this view. The bleakness of brown. The reminder that the chapter had closed, that time was ticking away.

One night, during those late hours; the ones where the world feels still and quietness seeps into your bones, I lay awake. I stared at the dark ceiling. Filled with worries and wonders and wishes. I got up to get a glass of water, and that's when I saw it.

The same window I had looked out hundreds of times at this point.

But this time, there was a new view.

The leaves had given away to an opening through the forest, an opportunity for the light to travel and traipse across Head Lake, through the branches. Our little village, lit up for the world.

And suddenly, I wasn't so alone.

Perched on my bed during those late hours, I watched as the stoplights changed colours, as the signs flickered to life. Every so often, the lone headlights of a care whizzed by; the reminder that others saw that time of day as well. That there was life out there; beauty and chaos and stories and love.

I began to look for the lights each and every night. As my belly grew and the tiny kicks swiveled and lurched to life, I would watch our little town twinkle with the promise of tomorrow.

As the early snows began to fall, I would wander back into the woods; glances towards the lake to see if I could pinpoint and trace those lights that called to me each night.

But during the day, they were gone. Just the bleakness of brown as the branches snapped and twisted in the cold. The light only showed itself during the darkest of times.

And now, I sit late at night. During those late hours; the ones where the world feels still and quietness seeps into your bones, I lay awake.

But instead of staring at my dark ceiling, filled with worries and wishes.

I'm left only with wonder. Watching my son as he coos and nurses himself back into a warm sleep; his tiny fingers curled around my pinky.

And I see our lights. The ones that hide away during the bright times, but show themselves in darkness.

Our little town twinkling, with the promise of tomorrow.

Top 10 ways to get on the naughty list

I think we all know that Santa has a naughty and nice list that he lives by. Most of us, I presume, are on the nice list. But if you've ever wondered how people get on the naughty list, here are the top 10 reasons, straight from the North Pole.

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

1. Put out oat milk and gluten-free cookies on Christmas Eve.
2. Build fire at the bottom of the chimney.
3. Attempt to use your buck tag on Rudolph.
4. Charge exorbitant amount for sleigh parking on roof.
5. Threaten to release photos of mommy kissing Santa Claus.
6. Poor review of North Pole customer service.
7. Pretend you are doing customs inspection at bottom of chimney. Seize entire bag of presents.
8. Ask him to sign complex, unreadable terms of agreement before using chimney.
9. Pester him for selfie and autograph when he is taking Mrs. Claus out on his day off.
10. Meet him at roof top. Wear Santa suit. Brandish a sword. Yell, "There can only be one!"

Gifts

Frost flowers sprouting on the windowpane,
my fingers tracing the winter lace, woven from ice crystals that bloomed on the glass overnight,
morning light flooding the bedroom, as I sprawl in a puddle of Sun, my belly, swollen as a Snowman's, after feasting on heaps of food,
grateful for the hands that prepared the meal, the arms that welcomed me as if I were family, not a guest,
my eyes, resting on the shelf, where I've laid out my gifts, so the first thing I see
when I blink open my bleary eyes on the Day After, is the generosity and thoughtfulness of others,
who see through the veneer and glimpse wisps of my Soul,
the book of poetry called Songs for the Open Road, nestled alongside a pair of hand knit mitts,
the colour of earth after Rain,
slipper socks with leather soles, that reach up to my knobby knees, handmade in a faraway place
that's never seen Snow,
a moss-coloured journal, its cloth cover embroidered with the branches and leaves of a twisting tree,
the paper inside, speckled with bits of dried flowers and leaves,
the blank pages, perfect for capturing all my twittering thoughts before they flutter away,
and if my belly grows hungry while I'm scribbling, I can scoop out a spoonful of Nutella
from the giant jar that's still wrapped in a red velvet bow, my secret treat whenever I feel flustered or low,
my eyes glancing out the window, at the square of blue Sky, not a fleck of cloud up there,
knowing from the frost flowers painting the glass, that the Air is so cold, it will numb my nose and toes, as soon as I step Outside,
so I loll in the puddle of Sun for a while longer, grateful for my gifts, perched on the shelf,
all but the last one, waiting on the floor by the door for my feet to slide into the cozy cocoon of the brand new boots I received,
so I can slog through the Snow without my feet growing cold,
the grips on the soles will keep me from slipping on a patch of ice on the sidewalk or
the side of the hilltop road,
the boots luring me to roll my Snowman belly out of bed and pull on all my layers of winter gear,
smiling as my feet slide into the boots, rich and dark as the jar of Nutella,
that I'll savour when I get back from meandering around in the cold, slipping my hands into my new mitts,
then stepping Outside,
inhaling the sacred quiet of this morning, the feeling still lingering the Day After, my Heart, full as my belly,
grateful for the gift of being Alive,
and the ones I received from those who treated me like family, though I was only a guest,
my spanking new boots crunching across the Snow, uncertain where I'm going to go,
letting my feet lead the way,
grateful for every step and every Breath that leads me through the world each day,
peeling off a mitt for a moment, so my fingers can fish out of my coat pocket, the littlest gift of all,
a stone Heart that fits in the nest of my palm, given to me by the one who knows how hardened my Heart can be,
so this stone can carry the burden for me, while I let my own, soften and expand,
clutching the talisman in my mittened hand, something to have, something to hold,
Snow, cradling my steps, Air, catching my Breath, as I clomp my way through the cold.

Sylvie Kalenda

Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email emily@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

Winter woods, submitted by Jill Moulton

A Fisher, submitted by Tammy Nash

A goofy deer having some fun, by Tammy Nash

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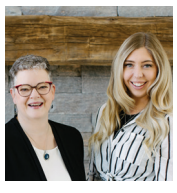

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happy NEW YEAR
From Our Entire Team!

Music in the Highlands

The Highlands Wind Symphony performed at Lakeside Church in December, to showcase their annual Christmas tunes. /TIM YANO staff photographer

A cozy Christmas in Wilberforce at the Essonville Historic Church as they participated in their Christmas Carol singing tradition in December. /TIM YANO staff photographer

HIGHLANDS OPERA COMMUNITY School

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Hallmark Christmas movie review: *Holiday Touchdown: A Chiefs Love Story*

BY ASHLEY MCALLISTER
County Life contributor

I'm back again with another Hallmark Christmas movie, and I've been waiting for this one with almost as much enthusiasm as counting down to Christmas Day, because we're covering *Holiday Touchdown: A Chiefs Love Story!* Now, since you're likely reading this because you don't have time to engage with pop culture and watch these movies for yourself, it is possible that you don't know why this is a big deal. Here's everything you need to know.

The Kansas City Chiefs are an NFL team (= football). The Chiefs started to get attention from non-sports fans because their tight end (this is a position in football, I Googled it), Travis Kelce, is dating Taylor Swift, and also because his brother is another NFL player, they played against each other in the 2023 Super Bowl, they host a popular sports podcast together, their mom, Donna Kelce, is adorable and universally loved, and he's really hot.

Now, the NFL is not an organization that is going to let a marketing opportunity pass them by - a characteristic they apparently share with the Hallmark network. That's how we were blessed with this holiday film, presented by Hallmark and the NFL in a partnership as unlikely as most relationships we find in Hallmark Christmas movies.

Holiday Touchdown is the story of Alana, whose entire family is obsessed with the Chiefs. They are season ticket holders, own a team apparel store, are competing to win Fan of the Year, and also have a family history of shared psychosis, which we'll get to later. Derrick, our male love interest, has a sign on his office door that identifies him as the Director of Fan Engagement for the Chiefs, which turns out to be a tangentially marketing-related job that determines the winner of Fan of the Year.

The word around the water cooler at Chiefs HQ (except it's a hot chocolate station because Hallmark) is that Derrick works too hard and doesn't spend enough time socializing or ingratiating himself into the culture of Kansas City. Since it's bye week (I don't know what this means), his colleagues bully him into "relaxing a little" and learning more about what "fuels the fans" - which means getting some Kansas City BBQ. They send him to Norma and Nic's BBQ restaurant, which happens to be owned by Alana's grandparents. In our first shameless cameo of the film, Norma and Nic's is run by Donna Kelce, who is wearing her son's jersey.

Derrick came here in a white sweater for a peer-pressured meal of meat you eat with your hands, but if Norma (of Norma and Nic acclaim), has anything to say about it, he'll be leaving with a wife, and the matchmaking begins. After some extremely not subtle maneuvering and borderline kidnapping, Derrick and Alana are manipulated into decorating the entire main street together, which they are good sports about. They bond as they decorate a tree with exclusively meat-themed (because: BBQ) ornaments. Respect.

We learn more about our main characters as Alana shares how her close-knit family are all best friends. Derrick shares the saddest story of all time, which is that since his family moved around so much his only Christmas tradition was sending change of address postcards to the North Pole so Santa would find him. Big Yikes.

Derrick learns that Alana's family has a vintage winter hat in a glass case in their store. Superstition states that the Chiefs only make it to the Super Bowl if someone in their family wears the hat on Christmas. She says this with an intensity that is worrisome, but Derrick, shockingly, does not immediately run for the hills. He is however justifiably skeptical. Alana and her family are offended that Derrick doesn't believe them, and they kick him out of the store with a fruitcake they have told him they reserve for their worst enemies.

Derrick proceeds to spend the holidays learning more about Alana's family for Fan of the Year, despite this hostility. They participate in an unlikely string of activities that somehow combine Christmas and the Chiefs, featuring real-life Chiefs player cameos, or at least I assume this because they are terrible actors, and Alana is starstruck each time and then lists sports stats. They also watch a Chiefs game together, which they lose, and then they do the thing all sports fans do where they forecast out how many games other teams have to win/lose in the next four days for the Chiefs to make it to the playoffs, which got very confusing, so I took a break to get snacks. Basically, the Christmas Day game is crucial for the Chiefs making it to the playoffs.

The next day, Derrick announces that the family won Fan of the Year, which means they get a trophy at the Christmas Day game. Immediately after this, Alana and Derrick attend a Chiefs toy drive, where Alana manages to lose The Hat. A lot of Alana's personality hinges on owning this hat, so she begins to spiral, stating that Christmas is ruined, the Chiefs will lose, they'll revoke the Fan of the Year Award, the store will go out of business (?), etc. etc. Her family does seem to realize maybe they've done some permanent damage with their superstitions (could this be why Alana is unmarried?!) and are actually very chill about the lost hat. The marketing team is less chill, saying things like "the mental health of an entire city sits on this family's shoulders". Heavy.

Derrick shows his gratitude for being included in the family's holiday traditions by gifting them two of their original stadium seats, which makes me question how much they're paying Directors of Fan Engagement. Alana, in return, continues her character devolution by telling Derrick that their whole relationship was based on being introduced by the hat, and losing it is a sign they aren't meant to be, which is absolutely crazy, even for Hallmark. Derrick, apparently never one to spot a red flag, reassures Alana that what they have is real, and it's not dependent on a silly hat. Alana is outraged that Derrick is a mature adult who believes people have a say in their own destiny, and Derrick walks away. Alana tries to explain this to her family with a long monologue about fate and the hat, and when she asks them if they also think that losing the hat means she and Derrick aren't supposed to be together, her dad wisely says what we're all thinking: "No".

On game day, Alana's family gathers at center field for the Fan of the Year award presentation. Alana doesn't want to attend initially, because she's finally embarrassed about her behaviour toward Derrick, and also doesn't want to tell all the fans that she lost the hat, which like actually is kind of fair. Derrick, who does not hold her accountable for her hat obsession and forgives her immediately, doesn't let her miss out on this momentous day, and drags her to centerfield, forcing her to make the speech she's been dreading - which seems like an appropriate punishment I guess. Alana admits to 75,000 people she lost the hat, but that the good luck lives on in every fan's individual traditions. However, Derrick earns every dime of that marketing director's salary by revealing he has had a Chiefs hat placed under each attendees seat, which means the tradition can continue, or something, honestly, it was really emotional and hard to follow. This is the most I've ever cared about a hat. I am crying real tears. Derrick and Alana make up and make out at center field as everyone cheers, because they are also true fans of love. And hats.

Thanks to Taylor Swift, I know that the guy that interrupts this kiss is the Chiefs coach, saying they need the field, which is probably another fun cameo for Chiefs fans. Honestly, this movie is a love letter to Kansas City. I wonder if it was sponsored by their tourism department.

As Alana and her family sit in their season ticket holder seats, they invite Derrick to join them, because turns out they never sold the extra seat that belonged to Alana's grandmother. They just knew one day she'd marry a Chiefs fan, which again explains some of the pressure Alana has carried her whole life. As the game starts, and Derrick is welcomed into this family, they realize they're sitting next to Santa, who - gasp! - returns the lost hat! However, Alana chooses not to wear it, closing us out by saying they have "all the Christmas luck they need".

While I have never been to Kansas City, this movie made me believe that as a lover of meat, Christmas, and Taylor Swift/Travis Kelce's relationship, I would fit right in. I would give it five vintage Chiefs hats out of five, and my therapist's number to Alana.

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Haliburton BIA Administrator

Job Summary:
The Haliburton Business Improvement Area (BIA) is seeking an enthusiastic and organized Administrator to play a vital role in supporting the BIA's mission to enhance the vibrancy and success of Haliburton's downtown business community. This role involves member engagement, event support, communications, and collaboration with key stakeholders to ensure smooth operations and the successful execution of BIA initiatives.

Key Responsibilities:
Member Engagement:
- Conduct regular in-person visits with BIA members to foster strong relationships, address inquiries, and gather feedback.
- Welcome new members with in-person orientation sessions, providing essential resources and information.
- Provide timely updates to members about BIA activities, events, and initiatives through newsletters, emails, and other communication channels.

Event Support:
- Assist in the planning, coordination, and execution of BIA events, ensuring seamless operations.
- Promote events through newsletters, social media, and the BIA website to maximize member and community participation.

Communication & Administration:
- Manage all communications received through the BIA email and respond promptly and professionally.
- Maintain and regularly update the BIA website with relevant and engaging content.
- Create and post event promotions, updates, and announcements on BIA social media platforms.
- Attend BIA meetings, take accurate minutes, and distribute them to members within 24 hours.

Collaboration:
- Work closely with the BIA President and Secretary to align efforts and ensure the effective operation of BIA initiatives and events.
- Foster a collaborative environment to support the collective goals of the BIA and its members.

Qualifications:
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage with a diverse group of members and stakeholders.
- Proven organizational and time-management skills, with a detail-oriented approach to tasks.
- Proficiency in social media management, website maintenance, and email communications.
- Experience in event planning and coordination is an asset.
- Self-motivated, proactive, and able to work independently with minimal supervision.

Working Conditions:
This is a part-time position with flexible hours, including occasional evenings or weekends to support events. The role involves both in-office and in-community responsibilities, requiring travel within Haliburton.

How to Apply:
Interested candidates are encouraged to submit their resume and a cover letter detailing their qualifications and interest in the position to brandon.nimigon@c21.ca. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

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Legion Events

Branch 441 Kinmount

Monday: Bid euchre 1 p.m.
Cornhole 7 p.m. (upstairs)
Ladies darts 7:30 p.m. (downstairs)
Tuesday: Coffee and chat 9 to 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday: Coffee and chat 9 to 10:30 a.m. Mixed darts 7:30 p.m. Canteen opens at 6 p.m.
Thursday: General meeting (3rd week) Members only 7:30 p.m.
Friday: Chair yoga 10 a.m. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. Supper special every week. Canteen opens at 4 p.m.
Saturday: Meat draw 5 p.m. Canteen opens at 3 p.m.
Sunday: Ladies Auxiliary meeting (members only) third Sunday every month at 2 p.m.
We welcome everyone to our events and we look forward to seeing you.

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge 1 p.m. Schofield Rm. Youth darts 6:30 to 8 p.m. Clubroom 10 to 18 years of age. All are welcome, no experience necessary
Tuesdays: League darts 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall. Bingo doors open at 6 p.m. Bingo starts at 7 p.m. First Wed of each month - $1000 jackpot, rest will be a $500 jackpot. Follow Facebook.com/Branch129 Bingo for the most up-to-date information
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Five meat draw, five prizes each draw, first draw 4:30 p.m., last draw 6:30 p.m. Tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards. 50/50 Draw 5:40 p.m.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, call Cheryl Waller at 905-447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Everyone is welcome!
Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips, Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541. Schedules are subject to change without notice. Check our Facebook page Minden Legion Branch 636 for more info.

Branch 624 Wilberforce

Hours - Sunday: Special Events Only, Monday: 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday: Closed, Wednesday: 2 to 6 p.m., Thursday: 2 to 10 p.m., Friday: 2 to 11 p.m., Saturday: 2 to 9 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 1 - Presidents Levy, Food provided, Noon to 2 pm.
Thursday, Jan. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 - Cornhole, $5/player, 7 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 3, 17, 31 - Wings and Jam, $15/lb, 5 to 8 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25 - Meat Draw, 3 p.m.
Monday, Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27 - Darts, $5/player, 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan. 8, 15, 22, 29 - Darts, $4/player, 2 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 10, 21, Seniors 55+ Lunch, $15, Noon
Friday, Jan. 10 - Fish 'n' Chips, $15, 5 to 8 p.m.
Sunday, Jan. 12 - LA Breakfast, 9 to 11 a.m., $10
Saturday, Jan. 18 - Karaoke, Food provided, 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Friday, Jan 24. -Spaghetti Dinner, 5 to 8 p.m., $15
Saturday Jan 25. - Pat and Phyllis Memorial Ice Fishing Derby
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THE HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO
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Board will reduce its teaching staff by total of five

Declining enrolment throughout the county school system, coupled with a board decision to reduce the number of grades at the Dorset school, will mean five fewer teaching jobs in Haliburton County next year.

At a meeting last Tuesday, the Haliburton County Board of Education supported recommendations from its special projects committee that will see the Dorset school reduced by four grades, a move that will mean the loss of two teaching jobs. The committee also recommended a reduction of one teacher at Haliburton Highlands Senior Elementary School, one at Archie Stouffer public school in Minden, and one at Haliburton Highlands Secondary School for a total reduction of five teaching positions.

The move does not mean that five teachers will be fired, however. Voluntary retirements and resignations will make up some, if not all of the five positions that will be lost.

The cutbacks in teaching positions are part of an ongoing trend that is expected to continue over the next few years, until the number of students entering and leaving the school system reaches an approximate equilibrium. Declining enrolment is also likely to force further changes in the present school system as the board reduces the number of grades in outlying schools, or closes them completely.

For the moment, however, the change at Dorset is the only one the board will implement for the 1981-82 school year.

The special projects committee, in its report to the board, recommended no changes at Wilberforce or Victoria Street schools. Gooderham school will continue to operate in its present Kindergarten to Grade 4 arrangement, at least until the end of the next school year, by which time the special projects committee will recommend whether the school should be closed or remain unchanged.

Cardiff school will also operate unchanged next year.

Staffing in all county schools is considered by the committee on an annual basis.

Cummins gets council seat left by Elliott

In a long, drawn-out process, Larry Cummins has finally made it to council.

This week, Cummins was appointed to Anson, Hindon and Minden council to fill a vacancy created when councillor-elect Dean Elliott was forced to resign because of a possible conflict of interest with his justice of the peace duties.

Cummins, a local businessman, first put his name before the public in the November 10 municipal elections. On election night when the votes were counted, he tied with Ed Pergolas for the last seat on council.

Two weeks later, when the recount was scheduled, Cummins lost the council seat by four votes. However, about the same time, Elliott was forced to resign and a vacancy was created at the council table. Although council was not legally bound to appoint the next closest candidate, it decided at its inaugural meeting, last Tuesday, to appoint Cummins to the position.

"It certainly was a long process; well I'm kind of glad the way things turned out," Cummins said in a telephone interview Monday.

Cummins said he felt council had made the right move by selecting the next closest candidate at the polls since it was so close to election time.

"It shows they're thinking of the people, not themselves," Cummins said.

In the next two years, Cummins said he would do his best to help run the municipality for the people and work for the betterment of the community.

Although Cummins said he did not have any specific projects he would like to see get underway immediately, he will be spending his first months on council learning

Cont'd. page 3

Murray Fearrey, right, was elected as Haliburton County warden on Monday night. Here, Malcolm McGillivray, 1980 warden, helps Fearrey on with the warden's robe.

Fearrey is new county warden, says 1981 will prove 'difficult'

Good forest management programs should be strived for in 1981 according to Murray Fearrey, new warden for Haliburton County.

At county council's inaugural meeting Monday night, Fearrey told the members of council that they should work towards establishing forest management programs, making the planning strategy a worthwhile document, and creating good working relationships with the county's unionized workers.

Another important issue to face the council will be dealing with problems facing the local OPP detachment. At a recent meeting of Dysart et al council, where Fearrey is reeve, the detachment sergeant spoke of staffing and distance problems faced by the local force. The sergeant was attending that meeting as local businessmen were concerned with the policing of the village.

During his speech Fearrey said the OPP's concerns should be investigated so the "whole county can have what it deserves".

In the year ahead, the county will be facing difficult economic times as high interest rates, declining lumber industry and construction effect the county, Fearrey told his councillors.

"1981 will prove to be a difficult year," he said.

He noted the county is facing another winter of high unemployment as well as having a "famous" low annual income.

Cont'd. page 3

New councillors assigned duties

Minden sets committee positions

Council representatives were appointed to many area committees at the inaugural meeting of Anson, Hindon and Minden council last Tuesday.

As part of the official ceremony, members of council were named to represent council on certain committees.

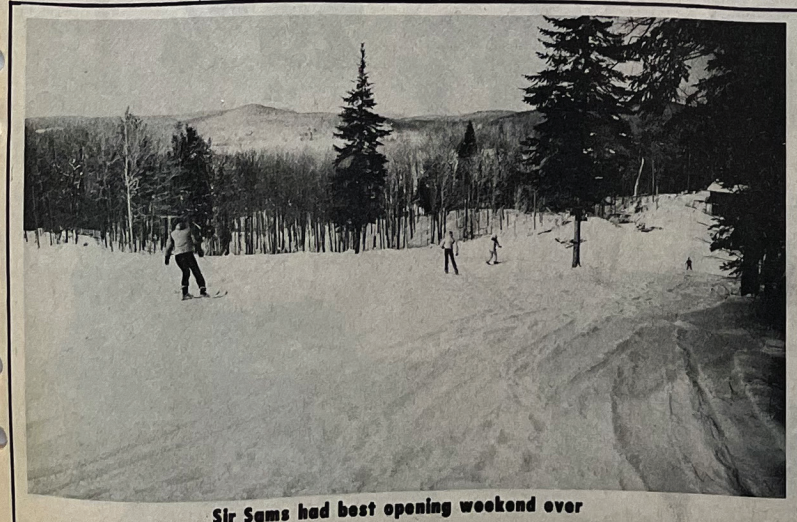
Newly-elected councillor Ed Pergolas was appointed to the Minden and District Horticultural Society. Also newly-elected reeve, Lloyd Walker, was named the Industrial development contact for 1981 and to the Ontario Home Renewal Program (OHRP).

Serving with Walker on the OHRP committee will be deputy-reeve Doug Pritchard, councillor Lyle McKnight and municipal law enforcement officer, Dick Schell.

Walker and McKnight will also be acting as liaison with the Red Cross Society for the next year.

Enforcement officer Schell

Cont'd. page 3



Sir Sams had best opening weekend ever

White Christmas all but certain

If this week's weather is an indication of things to come, all those who dream of a white Christmas should get their wish. A total of up to 40 cm. of snow (16 inches) has fallen on the Highlands since last Monday, and more is expected later in the week. Snowdepths now range up to 55 cm. in northern sections of the county.

Highest temperature recorded over the Monday to Monday period was 1C. Tuesday, December 9. The lowest was a bone chilling - 30C Thursday, December 11, and it was equalled Monday, December 15.

All lakes inthe county are now frozen. Smaller lakes which froze several weeks ago now have up to five inches of ice. Larger lakes generally have thinner ice and lake travel is still considered hazardous.

The snow has been a boon to skiers and conditions for both cross country and downhill are now excellent.

Snowmobile trails are not yet open.

A gradual warming trend is expected for later in the week, with more snow likely by Friday.

Future will depend on enrolment

Dorset school not closed at least for 1981-82 term

Dorset parents have won a partial victory in their fight to keep the public school in that community open. At a meeting last Tuesday, the Haliburton County Board of Education approved recommendations from its special projects committee that will see the school reduced from a full nine grades to a Kindergarten to Grade 4 facility.

The decision means two of the school's four classrooms will be closed, and that two of its four teachers will no longer be needed. The teachers will be absorbed into the county public school system, but the net result will be two fewer teaching jobs.

The decision may not have entirely pleased Dorset parents, but it did stave off the closing of the school for at least another year. Its long term future will now depend on the community's growth, or lack of it.

In recommending the change, the committee, in a report to the board, noted that the compromise would allow younger children to be educated in the community while at the same time providing students in Grade 5 and beyond a chance for a broader educational experience.

Those students will be educated in Muskoka, with the majority of them expected to go to Irwin Memorial School in Dwight, 11 miles from Dorset.

The committee also noted that keeping the school open would enable the board and the community to assess the growth or decline of the student population on a yearly basis to determine if the school should continue to function.

Dorset parents and local politicians have been opposed to the possible closure of the school on the grounds that it would hurt the community's attractiveness to potential newcomers. More recently, they have expressed a feeling that the community could grow in the immediate future because of the provincial government's commitment to increase research into the acid rain phenomenon.

In recommending a reduction in the number of grades at the school, instead of complete closure, the committee acknowledged area parents' and politicians' fears that if the school were closed, it would never be reopened.

Besides providing increased educational opportunities for senior students, the change to a 'K to 4' school will save the board money, the committee report notes. It says caretaking, heating and electrical costs will be cut when two of the school's four classrooms are taken out of service, and that expenditures for teachers salaries will be reduced by more than 50 percent. In addition, the committee said, the board may be able to rent out the two unused classrooms to further offset operating costs.

The net saving is expected to be greater than busing costs and fees to the Muskoka Board brought about by the transfer of students to Irwin Memorial school.

Before the board voted on the committee's recommendations, members of the Dorset parents group reminded trustees that the original decision to examine the future of the school had been prompted by a projected drop in enrolment that has not yet come about, and that the parents feel will not materialize, especially if the acid rain laboratory is expanded.

Parents also expressed concern about Irwin Memorial school's ability to handle an influx of more than 20 senior students from Dorset.

A third concern centred on the problem of French. Muskoka schools begin French instruction in Kindergarten, whereas the Haliburton County Board provide French in Grade 5 and beyond.

Feeling that Dorset students would be at a distinct disadvantage when they moved on to Irwin Memorial, the parents asked board members if French could be taught from Kindergarten onward at the Dorset school, using one of the two remaining teachers.

Director of Education J. Douglas Hodgson indicated that the request could not be considered, however, because the education act requires boards to provide equal educational opportunity to all its students. The board can begin French instruction in any grade it chooses under the regulations, he said, but it must offer it in all schools at that grade. Thus an exception could not be made at the Dorset school, even if the board wanted to do so.

Trustee Earl Cooper felt

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Echo will not publish in Christmas week

Because Christmas falls in mid week this year and in order that our staff members may enjoy the holidays, the Haliburton County Echo will publish early Christmas week. The Echo will be published on Monday, December 22, 1980. The deadline for display and classified advertising as well as for editorial submissions for that issue will be 5:00 p.m. Saturday, December 20.

There will be no Echo published the week between Christmas and New Year's. Our office will be closed from December 23 through January 1 inclusive.

We thank you for your cooperation on these altered deadlines, and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Students at Haliburton Highlands Senior Elementary School were warming up for Christmas holidays last week. Mrs. Carters grade seven class proudly displays their season's greetings.

Employment situation 'bleak' but new program could help

by Sue Cooper

Although there may be a few more people looking for work this year, the unemployment rate is about average for this time of year, according to the manpower Outreach office in Haliburton village.

Even though the winter months are generally a slow time in the Highlands, Manager Jayne Heppleston said the number of unemployed might be slightly higher this season.

"Things are looking a little bleak at the moment, but you know, the next day they could turn around and we could have orders for five casuals," Heppleston said in a telephone interview Monday.

Although all unemployment insurance applications are filtered through the local office, there is no way of determining the number of people on claims in the county," Heppleston said.

"It's about average for this time of year - maybe a little bit tighter this year because there hasn't bee as much construction," she said.

However, there is a possibility that 28 more jobs will be made available in the county this winter as the federal government's Canadian Community Development Program gets underway, Heppleston said.

This program will help out through the winter months and replaces the former Canada Works program, which was not available last year.

Although the program will not effect the largest unemployment area the county has, it will provide work for women, youth, native Canadians and the handicapped, Heppleston said.

"It's mainly for women, youth and physically handicapped, so it's not even going to reach a target that we're hefty in," Heppleston added.

The project will, however, add a welcome relief during

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Santa to make special visit to Haliburton this Saturday

Santa Claus is coming to town and not just on Christmas Eve. This year, at the special request of the Rotary Club of Haliburton and the Haliburton Legion Branch 129, Santa has agreed to take a couple of hours off from his preparations and visit with boys and girls in Haliburton village.

Santa will arrive at the Legion hall at 12 noon and will greet the children to be sure he's made note of their wishes for his visit Wednesday night before Christmas. And he's also said he'll be handing out presents to all the youngsters who turn up to meet him at the Legion.

At 1 p.m., there'll be more entertainment for the children, as well as a movie to top off the afternoon's activities.

Don't miss Santa's special visit to Haliburton.

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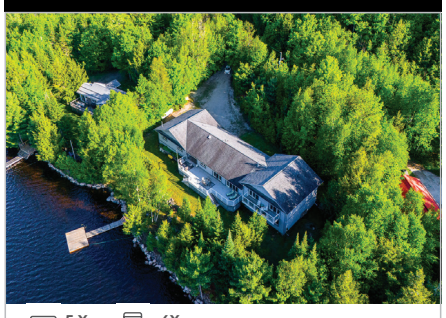
Wishing you a safe and happy holiday season!

The team at BRG

LITTLE REDSTONE LAKE
$1,675,000



5 X BED | 4X BATH | MLS# X10436789

GULL RIVER
$759,900

5 X BED | 3 X BATH | MLS# X10434162

EAGLE LAKE
$699,900

2 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X11823234

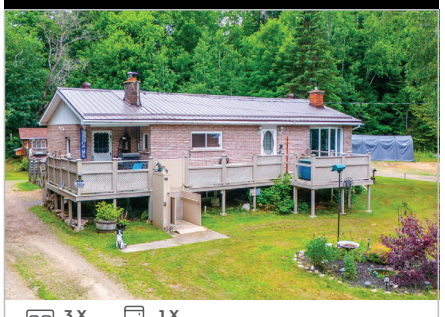
ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS
$679,900

*DEEDED ACCESS TO MAPLE LAKE | MLS# X10437737

BLACK RIVER/DRAG LAKE
$499,000

3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X10435688

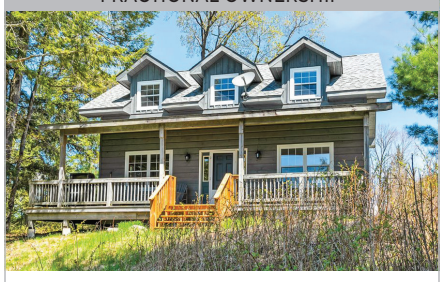
HIGHLAND GROVE
$474,900



3 X BED | 1 X BATH | MLS# X10437756

CHANDLER POINT
$67,000

FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP

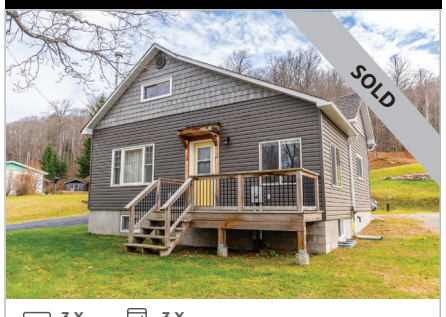


MLS# X11884689

HALIBURTON LAKE
$799,000

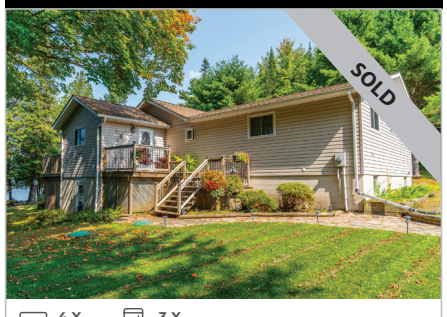
3 X BED | 1 X BATH

EAGLE LAKE
$597,000



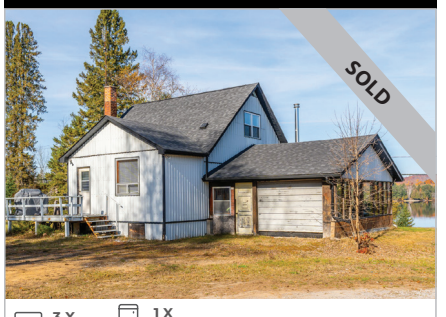
3 X BED | 3 X BATH

HALIBURTON LAKE
$1,250,000



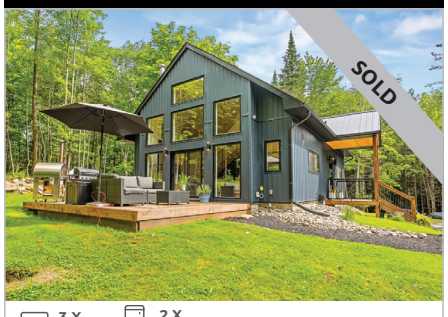
4 X BED | 3 X BATH

WEST GUILFORD
$395,000



3 X BED | 1 X BATH

EAGLE LAKE
$925,000



3 X BED | 2 X BATH

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Redstone Lake
MLS X10437225
$499,900
1.16 Acres

Haliburton Lake Road
MLS X10437518
$250,000
14.53 Acres

Bethel Road
MLS X10899794
$191,000
24.65 Acres

Basshaunt Lake Road
MLS X10437016
$109,000
2.19 Acres

Wenona Lake Road
MLS 10899857
$109,000
0.42 Acres

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